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AUTHOR Roberts, Eric
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ABSTRACT

An investigation into uses of evaluative feedback in a graduate-level external-studies course in supervision is reported. Methods of presenting feedback are described, utility and clarity of feedback discussed, and the role of feedback in external and traditional instruction compared. Student assessment of the methods utility and the accuracy of instructors' comprehension of student communication (as perceived by students), and instructors' own assessments of their teaching are analyzed. Conclusions of both students and instructors are given, with recommendations for future feedback methods in external-studies courses. (SK)

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Critical Feedback in Self-Instructional Courses: Need, Nature, and Effects

Eric Roberts

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INTRODUCTION

Early last summer, David Champagne invited me to teach a course with him. It was to be the first-time offering of a graduate-level external-studies course in supervision. Without knowing much about external studies, I accepted. Without knowing how to guarantee successful results, we taught.

At the time, neither one of us had had enough experience with this mode of instruction to feel truly self-assured in it. Neither one of us knew exactly what was needed to make it work most effectively. Neither one of us knew what differences to expect from the students, what they might need, or how to provide that which we couldn't identify. The best option apparent to us was to try what we thought likely to be good practices and then to hazard an evaluation that might eventually prescribe revisions.

What follows is a report on the investigation into our uses of evaluative feedback during the first term of this course's offering. This paper will describe some of our teaching habits throughout the term and will present findings from our evaluation concerning the presentation of feedback (to students), the utility of this feedback (to students), the accuracy of the instructors' comprehension of students' communications (as perceived by students), and some relative differences between this mode and traditional graduate-level course work. Further, the instructors' assessments of their own instruction (in terms of students' learnings) will be included. Tentative conclusions and suggestions will be offered.

PRESENTATION OF FEEDBACK

At this association's 1974 meeting, Dr. William Cooley presented a paper titled: Dimensioning Instructional Processes. Among other points brought out in the paper, Dr. Cooley identified "Stimulus--response--feedback" as one of the most critical of classroom variables in a study conducted by the Stanford Research Institute. The educational value of feedback is, of course, undeniable to anyone who has been a student. That it must be is clear. How it must be is not.

In a recent conversation with Dr. James Holland, I wondered about "how." I asked about the possibility of using the necessarily delayed sort of feedback Dr. Champagne and I had offered in our external instruction to create almost-immediate reinforcement through confirmation. Was it possible that we could do so by approximating the situation in which the student had performed originally? I thought that our practice of using the students' words and examples might be able to recreate the thoughts that had determined the work and, therefore, offer something close to immediacy in confirmation. Not so, Dr. Holland explained. It doesn't work that way. And anyway, what was really called for, he continued, was the development of materials designed to offer immediate confirmation by themselves--without reliance on an instructor. "But that almost never happens," he said. In so saying, Dr. Holland justified the need for evaluative feedback. Almost no materials do offer immediate confirmation. Furthermore, almost no materials provide sufficient clarity. Often it is only the feedback from an instructor that establishes the context necessary for understanding--as especially demonstrated during those frequent occasions when the answer can be neither "yes" nor "no."

Feedback is important. Both Dr. Champagne and I believed so at the start of our external class and do so still. Because we believed feedback to be important, we designed our instruction accordingly.

Student materials began to arrive through the mail after the first of the three class-interaction sessions. (These materials were pages easily removed from the text, with additional pages supplied by the student as necessary. For each original set of papers, students supplied one copy for our files. These were referred to throughout the term when making specific references and for evaluation purposes at the end of the term.) The first units were evaluated but were not graded. This was an effort to demonstrate what would be expected without punishing the students for not knowing in the beginning.

Throughout the rest of the term, we received the work sheets as the students submitted them, when they chose and in the order they chose. Both instructors read and evaluated the first materials received in an attempt to make sure that our individual choices for feedback were appropriate and in agreement. Since it would not be possible for both instructors to continue to read all of the student materials, we wanted to ensure that our notions of feedback were compatible so that students would not be subjected to clashing opinions of their work or divergent interpretations of the readings and units in the text.

After establishing such agreement, we usually divided the mail--each getting half. The mail was also sorted in such a way as to guarantee that all students would receive responses from both instructors at different times. (We did choose to present individual points of view to the students; we just didn't want them to suffer conflicting ones.) On receiving students' work, we tried to send out our responses within one week. At the outset,

Dr. Champagne wrote out his feedback by hand while I typed mine. After just a short time, I stopped typing because it caused a delay in responding. Throughout the 15-week term, the 17 students who completed the course (from the 42 students who started it) received 301 pages of feedback on the 1066 pages of material they submitted. Of course the students who did not complete the course in the prescribed 15 weeks did submit materials and did, therefore, receive feedback. The total volume of correspondence is considerably greater than the 1367 pages mentioned here. (For numbers of pages of feedback per student and pages of work per student, see Appendix A.)

(N.B. The figures are for numbers of pages written on. Not all were complete pages of correspondence. Some of the work sheets from the text show nothing more than check marks in columns of choices. Similarly, not all feedback covered a full page. Furthermore, feedback was also provided for audio tapes that were submitted by some students for specific sections of the course work.)

The way the feedback was written is, of course, equally as important as the way in which it was returned. An examination of 45 pages of this feedback (which comprise the total feedback received by four of the students who completed the course within the term) shows some interesting--although not accidental--patterns.

The separate pages of feedback are, almost without fail, addressed to the individual student. This practice was a conscious effort to overcome the inevitable distance imposed on students and teachers of external studies. More than half of the pieces of feedback include some personal--often anecdotal--note. More than half include questions to the student; questions that were intended to be taken seriously. And the phone calls and letters received suggest that often they were taken seriously.

The bulk of feedback from these 45 pages was broken down into several gross categories which show that: more than half provided additional information; more than half offered some form of specific praise/reinforcement for good work in the unit; more than one-third made specific recommendations for revision or future work; more than half made use of the opportunity to provide additional instruction--especially contextual; more than one-third identified specific criticism; all contained at least one form of evaluation--and usually not only that of a letter grade. (For numbers and categories of feedback, see Appendix B.) There is no clear connection between grade and the amount of feedback. All students received all of the different categories of feedback, at different times in the term.

Both instructors were adamantly convinced that such thorough and voluminous feedback was of great importance. Even though the writing of such an extensive amount of feedback required an approximate average of 20 hours each week (combined time for both instructors), it was felt that the effort was necessary.

While certainly self-serving, it would, unfortunately, be less than candid to suggest that no faux pas were committed in this attempt at personal feedback. There is one especially clear memory of a student who took justifiable offense at this instructor's sarcastic reaction to the repeated use of a currently fashionable term, making, as I did, the accusation that the word was more a rallying cry than a meaningful adjective. It is important to note, however, that this is the only incident that is easily recalled.

During the time of the course, the practice of providing extensive feedback was supported by little more than bias. But a particularly useful investigation by Dr. Doris Gow has yielded validation for our prejudice.

Dr. Gow also has prepared and taught an external-studies program at the University of Pittsburgh. Following her own instruction of the course, and

also following the instruction of the same course by another professor, Dr. Gow collected unit rating sheets from both classes of students as data for the formative evaluation of course materials. These sheets (See Appendix C for examples.) reveal striking differences in the rating of the same materials at different times, as taught by different professors. For example, the total number of "Very Good" ratings returned at the time of Dr. Gow's instruction is 152; the total number of "Very Poor" ratings from the same class is zero. In this case, absolute ratings possible (all students responding for all units) for any category would be 805. Equivalent numbers of unit ratings returned at the time of the second professor's instruction are 27 and 16, respectively. An absolute for any category in this case would equal 560.

As Dr. Gow reports (in Curriculum Design and Development Project, Final Report, Federal Project no. O-9043-B):

> It was interesting to note the difference in unit ratings under different instructors. The comments revealed an even greater difference in student opinion of the instructional materials then did the numerical ratings. Also, 18 of 23 students of instructor one continued into the second trimester while only 3 students out of 16 continued from the class of instructor two.
>
> Since the course is self instructional and is meant to be readily disseminable it was important to find out why this difference occurred. With only three interaction sessions a trimester, two of which were given over largely to testing, the student/instructor interaction could not have caused this difference.
>
> Analysis of the student posttests revealed a rather dramatic difference in amount and type of feedback. Instructor number one, whose students reported an overwhelmingly positive reaction to the units wrote extensive comments on every posttest. Instructor number two wrote relatively few comments.
>
> There was also a clear difference in the type of feedback. Instructor two usually gave feedback in the form of questions or in a negative form. For example, "This is not backward chaining," but without explaining what it was or giving an example of the principle the student was attempting . . .
>
> Instructor number one, on the other hand, responded to a hierarchy that was not charted correctly by doing one or more possible alternative hierarchies and suggesting that the student consider them. In response to an objective requiring the

student to "demonstrate awareness of the instructional strategies on which the program is based," the question was not only "By doing what?" An example was given, as well, "by defining the rationale for each."

And:

> As a result of this experience in field testing the materials, it was apparent that the instructor's manual must stress feedback and must emphasize the confusions which can result for students attempting self-instruction for the first time.

Dr. Gow concludes that:

> . . . the amount of feedback which might be acceptable when students and instructor are meeting each week is totally insufficient when the student cannot readily ask questions and receive answers.

It must be granted that there exists a possibility that the differences in ratings returned by different students at different times to different instructors for the same materials are some function of a variable other than feedback. Because the differences are so definite, however, it seems likely that this variable accounts for at least a substantial portion.

At any rate, our best guesses at the worth of our feedback efforts--even with validation--is for nought if it is not perceived and supported by the students for whom it was written.

At the last of the three class-interaction sessions, the instructors passed out to the students an evaluation questionnaire that was to be filled out and returned at the students' convenience. It was not specifically requested that students sign the questionnaires so there is no way to determine the extent of experiences represented in their responses. Some questionnaires may well have been completed and returned by students who were, at that point, in relatively early stages of the course work. Nonetheless, all of the questionnaires were reviewed and the responses that appeared were collected.

In answering questions about the presentation of the feedback, the

students established some agreement in attitude. Of 17 responses, only one believed that the feedback supplied was not of appropriate length. Those who replied to the question with more than one word made the following comments: not clear; long enough to be helpful; gave strength to the course; would like more: feedback excellent, humane, concise, insightful, length good.

When asked if typing would have improved the feedback, all respondents said, "No." Surprisingly, four of the 16 students answering the question explained that they found hand-written feedback to be more "personal."

Ten students believed that their feedback had been returned to them in a reasonable amount of time, but four did not. In a terminal comment, one student complained that it took 3-4 weeks to receive some replies. This came as a surprise to both instructors but there is no evidence to dispute the criticism.

Eight students believed that it would have been preferrable to submit larger rather than smaller units of work at a time. Seven others felt that that was not the case.

UTILITY AND CLARITY OF FEEDBACK

The need for clear, useful feedback is obvious. How to provide such feedback is not. This problem is further complicated by the obligatory questions: "Clear to whom?" and "Useful to whom?" Each profession defines its own vocabulary and those of us who make use of the "accepted" connotation/denotation frequently run the risk of confusing those who can't. This is an especially pertinent problem to educators who are in the business of initiating the uninitiated. Furthermore, for feedback messages to be useful, they must arise from a clear understanding of the materials on which they are feeding back information. And that requires that the original materials be clear. And that completes the frustrating cycle of confusion.

To bemoan the writing skills of students would not be useful. To offer remedies would not be possible. All this paper can do is describe the efforts that were made in this course and convey the reactions of the students.

The specific categories of feedback have been discussed previously. (See Appendix B.) What remains to be considered is a specific appraisal of the individual responses. (For examples of individual pieces of feedback--taken, again, from the 45 pages already mentioned--see Appendix D.)

An examination of the feedback sent to students shows that the feedback is individualised. That this should be so is hardly a major revelation--until it is realised that there have been thoughts of doling out critical feedback from standardised collections.

The feedback is individualised in the sense that each piece addresses a particular individual, commenting on a specific piece of work. Criticism,

praise, additional instruction, evaluation, agreement, contextual information, cautions, recommendations, questions, and personal recollections are all directed at specific pieces from the individual student's work.

The tone of all of the feedback reflects this specificity. It is thoroughly personal. Because both instructors fully realized that their messages were intended for only one person, it was completely comfortable for them to write personal letters, making use of shared information, shared attitudes, obscenities, jokes, sarcasm, word plays, opinion, and expected confidentiality as was deemed appropriate. (The volume of private, reciprocal communication supported this sort of intimacy.)

Both instructors shared an enthusiastic feeling for the sincere commitment that was demonstrated in a considerable portion of the students' work. It was felt that the instructors' own personal commitment fostered such reactions to a large degree. But to be sure, it is, again, necessary to refer to the students for confirmation.

Ten students believed that the feedback helped to clarify the expectations of the instructors. Of the two who did not agree, one explained that, so far, (s)he had only received one piece of feedback at the time (s)he completed the questionnaire. Other comments were included, such as: teachers are very critical; feedback made work more meaningful. Twelve students found the feedback easy to understand; two did not. One replied, "Most of the time" and another answered, "Not always." Of 15 students responding, only one criticized the feedback as being too general. The 14 others believed that it was neither necessary to make the feedback more specific nor more general. All 13 students responding to the question agreed that the feedback supplied was relevant to them.

In responding to questions concerning whether the feedback demon-

strated that the instructors understood the students' works, 10 said that it had, one said that it had not, and one each replied, "Most of the time," "Sometimes," and "Questionable." Six students said that they would be more personal in their communications if they took this type of course--from these same instructors--again. Eight believed that they would be neither less nor more personal. When asked if the feedback had been sufficiently attentive to issues raised by the students in their work, 13 said that it had, while one did not feel that it had been consistently attentive.

The questionnaire also asked if there had been any times when the students were made to feel ill-at-ease by the instructors' feedback. Six students said, "No." Seven others found that there had been such occasions. These students supplied the following remarks: couldn't reply except by phone; when I made an error which might be reflected in later units already completed; have trouble writing my meaning; instructor labeled "feminism" pseudo-chic jargon which has as much meaning as open education which the teacher didn't label jargon; yes, but acceptable criticism; yes, when the instructor said he couldn't read my work; disagreed with comments and couldn't respond.

EXTERNAL AND TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTION

External instruction, as an issue, is receiving considerable attention at this time. It would not, however, be useful for this paper to extend generalisations about the current controversy. This effort will only report the attitudes of the students and instructors from the first offering of the University of Pittsburgh's course, Curriculum and Supervision 880.

When asked to comment on the nature of external instruction's possible differences from traditional instruction, students made these comments: more individualized; more structured because of fewer meetings; more time to think; requires a lot of time, requires real commitment from students; much more work and no immediate--at the shoulder--feedback; I need a traditional course; the materials must be clearer and the course more structured; don't have the value of discussion; colder--can't relate with fellow students; requires more of student; students must be more self-disciplined; external-studies is harder; more work and more individualized. Two students perceived no difference, according to their responses.

The next question asked whether students expected a difference in amount of feedback from an external-studies course than from a traditional class. One student expected no difference. The others who responded to this question answered these ways: there has to be feedback in a traditional class if you use the professor; more feedback is necessary (in external studies); more feedback was received, but not as spontaneously; feedback should be individualized, but I'm not saying it wasn't; depends on the student--I needed feedback; I expect very good feedback; yes, more written feedback; yes, the feedback is more direct but there is little evaluation;

feedback must be written; external studies require much more feedback; external-studies students get more personal feedback; expect more feedback.

Of 15 students, one believed that an average instructor does not need special skills to manage an external-studies course. The other 14 respondents suggested these special skills: patience in reading assignments; skill to make comments constructive and not damaging; perception--what does the student say? What does the student mean?; must respond meaningfully; drive to get feedback to students; must be more specific; yes--in structuring the program to be self-instructive; clerical and ability to second-guess the meaning behind the word; clearer--faster; ability to individualize; curriculum design and clarity in feedback.

Nine students believed they "got to know" their instructors, listing feedback, class sessions, and phone calls as the ways in which they developed rapport. Five others did not feel that they "got to know" the instructors.

It is interesting that the general tone of comments--from the students--is so clearly supported by the individual attitudes of both of the instructors.

The instructors' worst criticism of this particular external-studies offering was that it required so much time. As has been mentioned before, writing what was considered to be appropriate feedback required at least 20 hours each week--on the average. This time is in addition to the hours of planning for each class session. These planning sessions were probably longer than average also, since there was so much material provided by the students illuminating the issues which needed attention.

In fact, an interview of both instructors revealed the belief that external instruction is generally more difficult to teach than traditional instruction. For those teachers who enjoy the immediate reactions of students, this mode poses a problem: such pleasures are not similarly

available. As the students said, there is no immediate feedback. This problem leads directly to another. The feedback that is supplied must stand by itself. All contextual inferences that might otherwise mediate feedback must be carefully written by the instructors; they have nothing to rely on but what they clearly say. This lack of support insists that all instruction--in the materials and in the feedback--be clear enough for readers to be able to understand the first time, without the aid of questions or other elaboration. External instruction requires planning that is consistently more careful than that required by traditional course work.

These restraints, the instructors believe, impose the necessity of certain special skills; skills very often the same as those identified by the students. Teachers of external instruction must be able to write with exceptional clarity. They must quickly and clearly reveal their own expectations so that it is possible for students to meet them. They must often overcome the desire to criticise what a student has written when it seems possible that that is not what the student meant. They must be able to write feedback that focuses on what the students meant in a way that can be useful to the (individual) student. And, of course, they must muster the necessary self-discipline to actually sit down with students' materials, read them, consider them, evaluate them, diagnose their weaknesses, and write.

Despite all of these pertinent and very real criticisms, however, both instructors believe that there is no information--and not all that many skills--that cannot be taught in this mode if all of the necessities are respected. In his interview, Dr. Champagne said, "I think anything I teach in a traditional setting I can teach in external studies." Both instructors believe that the performance of the students in this course

was at least as good as the performance that is to be found in traditional classes. The grades earned by the students in this class were favorably comparable to classroom instruction, even though the standards may well have been higher. There was even some feeling that external studies may be superior to the traditional mode because, since the students are not allowed the privilege of sitting quietly in the back of classes, students work harder. Furthermore, the volume of correspondence provides a clearer understanding of the students' progress and needs, which allows for more diagnostic teaching, making the instructor work harder. Of course, again, because all communication is written, instructors and students must be clearer in what they express than is necessary in classrooms where both have the opportunity to ask questions immediately.

All of the aforementioned conditions establish a situation of individualized instruction--which takes more time. These conditions also, however, foster a situation in which grading is easier because there are so many pieces of work than can contribute to a fair evaluation.

CONCLUSIONS

On the whole, students believed that external instruction should provide a great deal of clearly written, personal, individualised, specific feedback as quickly as possible. The feedback should not be overly harsh. They believed that an average instructor who was going to teach an external course would need the following skills and abilities: patience; clarity in writing; sufficient self-discipline to quickly evaluate and return papers; clerical; reading between the lines; individualisation; curriculum design.

Most of the students who responded to the questionnaire believed that they "got to know" their instructors and that this was very important. They still felt that the important opportunities for contact between students and teachers should be made easier. In a final comment, students replied as follows: enjoyed course, looking forward to continuing; new experience, plenty of work; satisfying; units too long and involved, confusing; should be more classes; should be pass-fail; lots of work but I enjoyed it; don't approve of contracts; course was offered at a bad time.

Once again, the instructors' comments are very similar. They are perhaps most succinctly expressed as in one of the students' remarks: A lot of work but I enjoyed it.

External instruction is not seen, by these instructors, as a possible replacement for traditional instruction. It would, at least in one sense, be a poor replacement because of the time involved. Not all students could manage this form of learning. Students must certainly be self-motivated and self-disciplined and willing to experiment. The traditional

coping mechanisms don't work. But such differences do not in any way undermine some of the accepted norms of instruction. When asked if he felt as though he had gotten to know his external-studies students, Dr. Champagne replied, "I know their minds a greater percentage better. I don't know their faces but I know how they think."

Clearly there are real pressures on an external instructor with which a man or a woman in front of a blackboard never need reckon. But the instructors' experience with Curriculum and Supervision 880 suggests that such reckoning may stand them in good stead. The demand that external instruction imposes on a teacher to so clearly conceptualize, organize, prepare, and then teach such a large body of information/skills can have no untoward effect on later performances.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. External-studies courses should never be viewed as cost-cutting measures.

2. External courses should be offered to explain the particular management skills that are required by external courses.

3. Some attention should be given to revising the work load of professors who offer external-studies courses because these courses can demand more time.

4. All feedback should be individualized.

5. All feedback should be extensive.

6. All feedback should be personal.

7. Hand-written feedback is acceptable.

8. Efforts should be made to evaluate the idea of offering feedback in less time-consuming ways. It may be useful to offer feedback on audio tapes which can more easily carry some of the nuances of our messages, as through vocal but not verbal cues. Tape requires less time than writing as well.

9. Instructors should make use of feedback as a vehicle for further, individualized instruction.

10. All feedback should be returned as quickly as possible.

11. It would most likely be useful to propose student clusters so that students can meet to share ideas. This could offer peer feedback.

12. External instructors must be available to students in other ways than through written feedback.

APPENDIX A

Student	Pages of feedback	Pages of student work
one	14	54
two	15	22
three	29	101
four	11	67
five	8	34
six	20	62
seven	24	44
eight	16	35
nine	12	93
ten	19	65
eleven	15	39
twelve	19	61
thirteen	21	114
fourteen	15	38
fifteen	20	74
sixteen	22	105
seventeen	13	34

APPENDIX B

Categories of Feedback	Number of Instances
Caution	3
Evaluation	45
Information	28
Instruction	20
Question	22
Reinforcement	34
Sarcasm	2
Specific Criticism	17
Specific Recommendation	18

APPENDIX C
(Taken from Dr. Doris Cox's Curriculum Design and Development Project, Final Report, Federal Project no. 0-9043-B)

Representative Unit Rating Sheet for Instructor One

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
1. The subject matter relevancy to your own interests (professional or otherwise)	4	5	7		
2. The clarity of objectives	4	7	5		
3. The degree to which the objectives and materials provide the information necessary to accomplish the unit objectives	2	6	5	1	
4. The interest value of the readings	1	5	5	6	
5. The assistance of self-scored tests to self evaluation	5	7	5		
6. The instructional value of the exercises (if applicable to this unit)	2	4	2	1	
7. The instructional value of the study guide(s)	4	10	3		

Representative Unit Rating Sheet for Instructor Two

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
1. The subject matter relevancy to your own interests (professional or otherwise)	3		2	1	
2. The clarity of objectives	1	2	3		
3. The degree to which the objectives and materials provide the information necessary to accomplish the unit objectives		2	1	2	1
4. The interest value of the readings		1	3	1	1
5. The assistance of self-scored tests to self evaluation	1	1	2	1	1
6. The instructional value of the exercises (if applicable to this unit)		2	1	3	
7. The instructional value of the study guide(s)	2	1	2		1

APPENDIX D
(N.B. These samples of feedback have been typed for this paper; originally all were hand-written.)

Sample One

Name

1. Compatibility will have to be only one of the criteria. A balance of skills is also necessary.

2. Time depends on training and/or ability to be honestly confronting to get out issues rather than surface agreement. In most teams I've worked with, our effectiveness grew to really autonomous stages for about a year, then, unless we deliberately sought other areas to work on, we remained comfortable at that stage but gradually just knew each other's quirks and problem areas. The three years seems too long a time to me. I'd guess if we went through leadership training for a week or two together we could rapidly accelerate this effectiveness.

3. Or triviality, but if the group is truly split, over program, then it's best to find it our early and either change them or move them out.

4. Any sampling will bias results. You must simply decide which biases you wish to live with and which ones you want to know about.

5. Autonomy is always relative and contracts may raise the relative level depending on how they are drawn and the processes used in drawing them.

6. You've got the process defined in its real purposes.

7. Egos are not necersarily pummeled by evaluation if it is not seen as an attempt to prove failure, but rather as an attempt to develop success further. I know this is idealistic, but, based on our evaluation of this first term course, I am rewriting whole sections to improve them. I don't

feel badly at all. I recognize that they will get better than their present good state to me of Nirvana.

8. You've hit the issues.

Really a good analyst.

Grade

Signature

Sample Two

Name

1. We go into this area in greater detail in a later unit (Kappa) which will be ready for Fall term, but you have used and applied the ideas thoughtfully. The essential idea is the centrality of planning based on goals, and the repeated training. You express that idea.

I'd integrate the one-to-one supervision more carefully with the in-service development effort. All teachers need some one-to-one. Some for remediation, some for reinforcement, and some for extended mastery.

Signature

Grade

Sample Three

Name

In none of the three role grids is there a "Member's Response" expressed in terms of behavior. It was intended that this heading denote a piece of action performed in response to the threatening change. While your description of the member's responsive mood may be wholly accurate, it is less

revealing than forecasted action. Furthermore, action is far easier to react to than are generalized emotions.

2. Yes, that is one intent of the exercise. At the same time, it is hoped that, by charting the activities, interactions, norms, and sentiments, it will become easier to decipher patterns of the persons/personalities with whom you work.

3d. What will be the child's reaction to perceiving your pity?

What are <u>your</u> norms? What is consistent about the behaviors of teachers that has a strong effect on the students? (The interactions, sentiments, activities, and norms are intended to be those of the teachers you might supervise. For the moment, exclude the children--except as reactants to teacher behaviors.)

We have chosen not to grade this exercise in an attempt to give as much direction as possible, hoping to maximize the probability of success.

Signature

<u>Sample Four</u>

Name

System 1

d. This is a good summary. It tabulates information without polluting it with inferences.

e. Second statement is worthwhile but the first hinges on the value judgement of relative efficiency.

f. Good inferences.

g. True, but that's not the goal of the classroom (hopefully) and these limits are just something we have to work with.

System 2

b. This observation tool does not yield information about interaction. It only quantifies physical placement.

d. 4-5 Why?

e. It is important to realize the strict confines of the data collected.

System 3

3. Good summary.

The use of these observation tools is quite good. It is still necessary, however, to deal with all of their limitations, realizing that hard data is usually narrow data.

Grade

Signature